

Statement Submitted by

Dr. YANG Jianli*

To the Congressional-Executive Commission on China (CECC) hearing titled, “Dissidents Who Have Suffered for Human Rights in China: A Look Back and A Look Forward”, Dec.7, 2016.

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A.

Democracy for China: Missed Opportunities and Opportunities Ahead

The 1989 pro-democracy movement stood against government corruption and for democracy and freedom. This movement was

widespread but ended in bloodshed. The Tiananmen massacre created a strong sense of fear and dismay of general politics among ordinary people. Any room for a public system of checks and balances against governmental abuse of power was taken away.

It also created a sense of fear and crisis within the Communist regime, because it had brought unprecedented public awareness to human rights and democracy. Life was no longer the same for the rulers who had to face a completely different domestic and international environment.

The subsequent disintegration of the Soviet Union and the Eastern European Bloc cast an even heavier cloud over the heads of Chinese Communist officials. “How long can the red flag continue to fly?” They all started to doubt.

To be sure, the CCP regime was struggling to survive the Tiananmen crisis, for which breaking international isolation was one of the imperatives facing the regime. Less than three weeks after the Massacre when China’s leadership was least assertive and most susceptible to outside pressures, President Bush secretly sent his special envoy National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft to meet with Deng Xiaoping and other Chinese leaders.

The meeting, later made public, did not seem to bring about any tangible results for either side. But this very gesture of President

Bush's revealed America's weakness and assured China's leadership the US's intention to continue the recognition of, and maintain the normal relations with, the repressive regime even if there was no indication of its willingness to admit or correct its serious mistakes or crimes. On July 28, 3 weeks after his special envoy returned to Washington, President Bush wrote a second, extremely carefully worded letter to Deng Xiaoping. "Please understand", wrote Bush, "that this letter has been personally written, and is coming from one who wants to go forward together. Please don't be angry with me if I have crossed the invisible threshold laying between constructive suggestion and 'internal interference'..." What could that imply? Judge for yourselves.

Democrats, especially Governor Bill Clinton in his campaign trail, harshly criticized Bush for "kowtowing" to China, while some conservatives saw Bush's move in the aftermath of the Tiananmen incident as premature in the absence of conciliatory gestures from Beijing. Different China views were reflected in the debate on whether and how to continue to grant China a MFN trade status.

One side of the debate, led by Rep. Nancy Pelosi and Senator George Mitchell, asserted that US trade relations with China must be linked to China's human rights record. We, Chinese democracy activists, supported this idea because we understood that without such a linkage, continuing normal trade with China would be like a blood transfusion to the CCP regime, making it

more aggressive and harming the interests of both the American and Chinese people. This idea was embodied in Pelosi and Mitchell's legislation in 1993. But one year after assuming presidency, President Clinton took a 180 degree turn and reversed the policy. The reversal was based on the theory, which was widely upheld by corporations, columnists pundits and policy makers, that trade would lead to democracy because trade would inevitably result in economic growth and the growth of the middle class which would in turn demand more political freedom.

This theory does not seem to apply to China, at least up to this point.

With money and technology pouring in from the U.S. and other Western countries, the Chinese Communist regime not only survived the 1989 crisis, it catapulted into the 21st century. The country's explosive economic growth lifted it from one of the poorest countries to become the number two economy in the world; but China remains firmly near the bottom of indicators on democratic development. Over the years China's middle class have largely been acquiescent to its one-party dictatorship and its gross violations of human rights. What has gone wrong, in China and the international community?

Let's look at China.

In 1992, when the Americans were heatedly debating about

China policy and about to delink human rights from trade, Deng Xiaoping took the famous Southern Inspection Tour to further economic opening up. Communist officials at all levels soon realized three realities: First, the Chinese Communist Party's stay in power has nothing to do with communist ideals. Second, "economic growth means everything;" that is, continued economic growth is the last, best hope to keep the CCP ship afloat. Third, in order to uphold the one-party dictatorship, it had to rely on capitalizing on the dark and evil side of human nature: spoiling the elite in exchange for their loyalty.

With the understanding of these three realities, the communist officials developed an undocumented but almost unanimously accepted code of conduct-or rather, code of corruption. So, every piece of governmental power is on sale in the market and every corner of the market is invaded by political power.

Officials in all government agencies spent most of their energy beefing up GDP, engaging in power arbitrage, bribing their superiors, and seeking luxurious personal perks. As a result, the Communist Party elite, who used to label themselves "the vanguards of the proletariat class," had either turned themselves into get-rich-overnight capitalists, or become brokers, patrons, and backers of domestic and foreign capitalists.

In such a political environment, political power was dancing a full-swing tango with capital operation. Low human rights standards, low wages, lack of environmental protection

regulations and enforcement, and the illegality of collective bargaining all contributed to creating a golden opportunity for domestic and international speculative capitalists. As a result, “money” quickly courted “political power.” Business venture takers would go to any length to seek out someone in power to serve as backers so that they could grab market opportunities without fair competition. They also used political connections to shed any and all legal and social responsibility. In a sense, the Chinese Communist Party, which used to be China Inc.’s sole shareholder, had now opened up its equity and offered its shares for capitalists to purchase.

This is very important for one to understand why “the middle class prediction” has so far failed in China.

One. Given China’s government-market relations, the middle class owed its success to the privileged relations with the state. To expect such a state-dependent class to make bold political claims would have been fanciful.

Two. Trade and economic development were carried out as a matter of deliberate state policy, unlike the US and UK these early developed countries which developed without knowing, the fast growth did not give rise to a politically independent middle class, but instead allowed the existing ruling structure to absorb into its own ranks the most talented and ambitious members of business elite. The CCP’s 16th National Congress, for example, published a new Party Charter that welcomed

capitalists as Party members.

Meanwhile, the shares of China, Inc. were offered to China's intellectuals as free, performance-related stock options. In order to sustain stability, the CCP regime offered all kinds of bribery incentives to buy off anyone and everyone of importance and influence in society. The bribery list includes bureaucrats at every level, military officers, and business leaders as well as college professors, journalists, publishers, authors, art performers, high-profile athletes, and so on. The government pays all these people off in the form of salaries, bonuses, state-covered expenses, free medical insurance, subsidized housing, free pension plans and so on. Laws and policies more and more favor this group of people in exchange for their recognition and acceptance of the political status quo. Their income and perks add up to wealth that is disproportionately higher than that of ordinary workers, farm workers, clerks, and small business owners. Such a policy of co-opting and buying off potential opposition was quite effective in conjunction with the purges and persecution after the Tiananmen massacre. The cruelty of political reality created terror in the minds of intellectuals as a psychological deterrent. As time went on, fear turned into the cynicism, they became increasingly indifferent to what was right and what was wrong. Indifference and hypocrisy rapidly became a new fashion that the modern Chinese intellect tried to follow. This, coupled with a piece of the action in China Inc., made many intellectuals-who had once been independent and once been considered the conscience of the society-soften up their

position against the post-1989 status quo.

Over the 1990's and the first 10 years of the 21st century, in China, power (political elite), capital (economic elite) and "intellect" (social and cultural elite), were bonded together and formed an alliance that is maintaining the existing political order. This alliance owns and runs China, Inc., dazzling the entire world with its wealth, might and glory. With China's vast geographic size and population, the shareholders of China, Inc. have impressed many observers with their prodigious wealth accumulation and astonishing growth rates, making those same observers believe that one-party dictatorship is good for economic growth. By the same token, these shareholders also control all the channels of the information flow and dominate the public discourse. They can make their voices loud enough so the outside observers believe that they represent China, that they are China-the whole of China.

The truth is, there is another society named China, a society constituted of over a billion Chinese who are virtually laborers working for China, Inc. and whose basic rights are almost totally disregarded, the China that people sarcastically call "the China of shitizens."

This was the China's two-China structure I often talked about before Xi Jinping took the power. This was largely a two-player game.

During the same period, the US diplomatic establishment largely harbored the delusion that economic growth will bring about democracy in China. US Presidents and other senior officials, deeming human rights issues inconvenient while engaging with China, would avoid them as much as they could. Faced with the rising China, US gradually lost leverages. Now, the Chinese leadership practically cares little about the pressure from Western public opinion because politicians and businessmen from around the world are salivating at China's immense purchasing power, investment and markets. It's no exaggeration to say that today, Chinese leaders are the most well-received, honored guests in a majority of countries worldwide; China is the destination for many of the world's elite who thirst for gold. Beijing tightly controls the freedom of the press. They could cut off Google and Yahoo anytime; they'd refused visas for New York Times journalists and critical scholars, and blocked access to Twitter and Facebook. All without impunity. While at the same time, they can set up any media they would like in the US. Ironically, China, which screens, censors and bans any print and electronic publication, has been invited to serve as the country of honor at book fairs in Frankfurt, London, and New York! Hollywood is the epitome of free American culture; filmmakers are free to ridicule, mock, and criticize American politicians and government officials such as senators, judges, and the president, without fear of persecution. But in their pursuit of China's box office dollars, Hollywood executives have consciously decided to steer clear of any criticism of the Chinese government. Despite this, American movies are still censored in China, and

some are not allowed at all. Virtually all American media are blocked in China. In the United States today, the Chinese government and its surrogates have wide access to universities, think tanks, and broadcast studios through which they can advance their opinions and rationalize their actions.

China is using the economic power it has gained with the help of the West to build a formidable, modern military. As its power grows, China is demanding a re-write of international norms and rules. China wants to create a new international order with China at the center of the Asia-Pacific region, bringing regional and world peace under threat. The current South China Sea tension is just a case in point.

In short, the failure of the US to proactively seek advancement of human rights and democracy in China has in turn harmed its long term national interest and its democratic way of life.

Let's look at China again to examine opportunities ahead of us.

Despite his unprecedented high-profiled anti-corruption effort, Xi Jinping has largely continued the two China structure and shown the world that he is more determined than his predecessors not to abandon the one-party dictatorship in favor of democratic reforms.

A subtle change, however, is taking place largely due to Xi

Jinping's personality, anti-corruption campaign and the unstoppable economic down turn.

Xi Jinping has concentrated power in his own hands and built a cult of personality. The Economist writes that Xi is now not the CEO (the chief executive officer) but the COE, the "Chairman of Everything." He's the head of state, the leader of the Communist Party, the commander-in-chief of the armed forces, the head of the security services, the head of the committee in charge of the so-called "comprehensive reform," and also the person in charge of the economy.

He has abolished the practice of "collective leadership," which was adopted in 1982 to prevent a return to the totalitarian terror of Mao's unchecked dictatorship, which produced such horrors as the Cultural Revolution. All this has undergone through power struggles in form of anticorruption campaign. In doing so he has alienated his comrades at all levels and they have remained in a "state of idle" to quietly protest. One of the major reasons behind Xi's anticorruption campaign is the two-China ruling model-co-opting the elite and exchanging corruption for loyalty, has become increasingly costly and thus almost unbearable. But ending that model without granting people more liberties is an impossible task. The only thing it can achieve is to alienate the political, business, intellectual elite, the middle class if you will. With the economic down turn, more and more members of the middle class are feeling insecure and seeking to leave the ruling structure and even the country.

At the same time, Xi, acting out of fear, has overseen the harshest crackdown on dissent since the Tiananmen massacre, arresting lawyers, academics, workers, and civil society activists, and tightening controls over the media and access to the Internet.

Politically, the elite who are just beginning to turn their backs on the regime, are caught between a ruling party above, and a mass of workers and peasants below, with whom there is no mutual trust.

Xi Jinping is a game changer. He is unwittingly turning the two player game into a three player game, dissolving the power base that has helped the party stay in power to this day. This is the deepest crisis facing the Xi Jinping regime.

To be sure, growth is slowing; the party is in disarray, because the rules it has established to limit internecine political warfare have collapsed; Beijing's foreign policy is driving the Sino-U.S. relationship toward conflict; middle-class acquiescence is beginning to erode.

But I do not pretend that revolution will take place tomorrow. We must be noted it usually takes four factors to be present at the same time to begin a real democratic transition in an autocratic country: 1) general robust disaffection from people; 2) split in the leadership in the autocratic regime; 3) viable democratic opposition; and 4) international support.

Let me elaborate.

First. China's Stability Sustaining System treats every citizen as a potential enemy, and it has successfully made them enemies—dissidents, independent intellectuals, land-lease peasants, victims of forced demolitions and eviction, victims of forced abortion, veterans, migrant workers, Tibetans, Uyghurs, Mongolians, Christians, and Falun Gong practitioners, you name it. The CCP regime does not lack enemies. With slower economic growth, the grievances of the shitizens will be laid barer and social unrests can only be mounting.

Second. As I said earlier, the elite China is beginning to decompose. Party's leadership unity has also disintegrated, as shown by the purge of Bo Xilai, Ling Jihua, Zhou Yongkang and their cronies since 2012.

Perhaps the only achievement in China's political system in the past 30 years is the establishment of the "two-term, 10-year, one-generation" term limit system. Many observers predicted that such a system would ensure long-term stability for the CCP regime, wishfully believing that this system helped the CCP find a way out of the pit of power discontinuity that has plagued all dictatorships in history. The Bo Xilai incident, however, mercilessly burst that bubble. Now it is Xi Jinping himself that is challenging this norm. The cracks within the party are only widening.

Third. The concept of democracy has prevailed in the minds of the general public, thanks to the dozens years of efforts made by the pro-democratic activists both in and outside of China.

In the meantime, the ordinary people are becoming more mature, more skillful, and more aggressive in fighting for their own civil rights. Generally speaking, as citizen forces grow and the civil protests escalate, struggle for power among different factions with the communist regime will become public. Especially, once the external pressure reaches a critical mass, the rivalry factions with the CCP will have to take the citizen force into serious account and seek or use the latter's support.

That said, I want to emphasize that we need an overall, viable pro-democracy movement to force the dictatorship to crack open. A milestone to meet that objective would be the formation of a group of civil leaders able to represent the general public, integrating the middle class and lower class people in demanding for democracy, and to at least partially disrupt the current political order — a group that will catch attention and support of the international community and can carry out and to call for effective negotiations with the government.

Fourth, last but not least, international support.

China under one-party dictatorship cannot rise peacefully, and its transition to a democratic country that respects human rights,

rule of law, freedom of speech and religion, is in everyone's best interest, including America. In other words, the U.S. must push for a peaceful democratic transition in China. The reason for this is simple: To support China's regime, a regime that ruthlessly represses its own people, denies universal values to justify its dictatorship, and challenges the existing international order to seek its dominance, is morally corrupt as well as strategically unsound. Like Frankenstein's monster, China is now seeking to revenge against its creator – the West.

While many policymakers in Washington have now realized that it is time to get tough on China, some still believe that the present and future conflicts between the U. S. and China can be managed. My view is this: Without China's democratization, a clash between the U. S. and China is unavoidable because the two countries' strategic goals are on a clashing course and their core interests cannot be compromised.

I hereby call the US to end the compartmentalization of human rights and begin to engage China with moral and strategic clarity.

To start, the Congress should pass a China Democracy Act that flatly states that enhancing human rights and democratic transition in China is decidedly in America's national interest and that directs the Federal government and all its agencies to make democracy and human rights advocacy the core of all engagement with China. This would be binding legislation precluding the currently widespread but inaccurate claim that

Congress must balance, on the one hand, its claim to support the universal value of human rights, and, on the other hand, “America’s national interest.” The bill also would require a report from the President to Congress every year on how any government program, policy, or action during the prior twelve months has strengthened or weakened human rights and democratic values in China.

All federal departments of government – every single one – should have to report on what they’re doing to bring democracy to China by advancing human rights and the rule of law there. The Act also put them on notice to take no action, adopt no policy and implement no program that would undercut the democracy movement, or weaken human rights in China.

Such a China Democracy Act will give us a better idea of what successes we’ve had so far, what caused them, and how we should increase financial resources and deploy them to promote democracy and human rights.

Such an Act will serve as America’s grand strategy toward China, setting a firm foundation that not only guides U. S. activities with China in all spheres, but also makes clear of the U. S. intentions to the Chinese government and sends an unequivocal message of support to the Chinese people.

No one can predict with precision when the moment of dramatic opening for change will come in China. Virtually every one of

the sixty some peaceful transitions to democracy in the past few decades have come as a surprise to the US.

Above all else we must maintain our faith in my compatriots that they can and will join the vast majority of the world's peoples who now live in free or at least partly free countries. An opening for change could come in the next few months or it may take a few more years. But it will never come without collective efforts, including those from the international community. So we must persevere and keep the faith and be ready.

B.

New Approach to Take Back American Jobs while Advancing American Values

Why America's China Policy has failed. America may have won a few battles but it is losing the war, and its China policy has not worked by any standard in the past 30 years. The primary cause for the failure can be attributed to a fundamental misunderstanding of China's strategic intent, and a corresponding response with moral and strategic clarity. Regime security is the number one concern for China's Communist Party: it wants to maintain permanent rule of China's government, and replace capitalism with "socialism with Chinese characteristics", and replace Western civilization with Chinese civilization.

We need an American-values focused foreign policy. The Trump Administration must take a completely different approach in dealing with the Chinese regime by returning to an American-values focused foreign policy, and strike directly at the vulnerable spots of the regime to force China's democratic transition. A democratic China will avoid the inevitable conflicts with the U.S., and ensure a lasting peace in the region and the world.

We recommend the following specific actions:

1. Use the US market as leverage: withdraw China's permanent trade status and link it to political reform/human rights improvement, and de-militarization of South and East China Seas; deny foreign tax credit to companies that invest in the localities with gross human rights violation, and ban product imports from those localities; impose more restrictive export controls on dual use as well as surveillance technology, and other similar measures to address the unfairness of one-way free trade resulting in China's huge trade surplus of \$3 trillion, and millions of American job lose, all of which will not only bring back jobs from China but allow the US to take the moral high ground.

2. Use Taiwan and Hong Kong as leverage: modify the Taiwan Act and the Six Assurances to reflect a full democratic country status and affirm its legitimacy by allowing Taiwan to be a normal member of the international community; support HK's

struggle for universal suffrage by making it a major bilateral issue with China.

3. Use Japan as leverage: encourage Japan to take the lead in promoting democracy in Asia-Pacific and return it to the normal status of a great power.

4. Use the Chinese regime's lack of legitimacy and moral base as leverage: engage with China's democratic forces at a new level by passing the China Democracy Act to ensure all US government agencies are consistent in advancing a democracy agenda when engaging China, and by passing a China Defense of Human Rights and Civil Society Act, a China-specific Magnitsky-like legislation to ban travel and freeze assets of Chinese human right abusers, and pass the Act to rename the plaza in front of the Chinese embassy after imprisoned Nobel laureate Dr. Liu Xiaobo.

5. Use the UN human rights mechanisms as leverage: because both the Chinese government and its people take the UN as a legitimate world governing authority above the US, and the Chinese government has taken the UN as the stage on which it seeks to compete with the US to build a bi-polar world order in its own way, the Trump Administration must strengthen the US leadership role in forming an alliance of democracies to confront China on human rights collectively, and formulate a stronger human rights policy toward China that is consistent and cogent.

C.

Position Paper on Religious Freedom in China

The rapid growth of Christianity since the 1980s harbingers a profound change in the Chinese society. The Chinese government official data indicate there are 2300 million to 4000 million Christians in China. However this number does not include the members of the Chinese house churches because the Chinese regime refuses to consider them as legitimate religious groups. If these Christians are counted, the total number of Chinese Christians could reach over 100 million. Some estimate believes that China is on its way to become the world's largest Christian country by 2030 with 240 million believers. Experts even predict that one third of China's population will convert to Christianity in next 30 years.

However, the Chinese Communist regime perceives the exponential increase of Christians to be a serious threat to its security and its permanent rule in China. They believe the Western reactionary force is using religion to infiltrate China and compete with the CCP for the people's minds and souls through ideological brainwash, ultimately leading to a color revolution to topple the regime.

While the regime leader Xi Jinping insists that all CCP members must be “unyielding Marxist atheists,” he warns that “we must resolutely resist overseas infiltration through religious means and guard against ideological infringement by extremists.” This perception made the regime shift the policy toward Christianity from “cautious management (谨慎管理)” to “proactive defense (积极防范) ,” attempting to change what the regime called “Primus Solus status” of one religion (一教独大) -- Christianity -- in China.

The Chinese regime has developed a comprehensive strategy in its attempt to reverse the trend. While the CCP continues to use persecution as a tool to instill fear in Chinese Christians, it has become much more sophisticated in employing other measures to respond to the rapid growth of Christianity in China. The strategy is summed up by Xi Jinping as “two goals and one means (两个目的和一个手段).” The first goal is to ensure the CCP’s absolute control over all Christians; the second goal is to sinicize Christianity in order to thwart the West’s attempt to use religion to “incite a color revolution.” The CCP’s “one means” is to use so-called “legal measures” to manage religions, which means they aim to control and ban underground Christian churches through the disguise of law.

First, the regime is using the newly passed China’s National Security Law to “prevent, frustrate, and legally punish infractions of law and crimes conducted in the name of religious

activities that compromise national security, resist overseas forces' intervention in domestic religious affairs, and maintain the normal order of religious activities (Article 27).” The regime brings all sorts of criminal charges against Christian practitioners; charges such as criminal “cult” activities, “gathering a crowd to disrupt public order” and “fraud” are arbitrarily brought against tens of thousands house church pastors, elders and congregants.

In parallel, the regime has launched a massive campaign to sinicize Christianity. This sneaky attack on Chinese Christians is extremely dangerous because it fundamentally and quietly alters Christian teachings to support the regime.

The essence of the sinicization is to remake Christianity and modify it in both doctrine and form into a religion without Jesus that will act as a tool to help strengthen the power grab of the CCP . According to the regime, the sinicization demands that all Christians to remain loyal to the CCP and obey its rule before they yield to God, that all Christians’ activities must submit to the highest interests of serving the country, and that all Christian teachings must conform with the socialist core values and be interpreted accordingly. In addition, the architectural appearance of churches, worship rituals, music, and other religious practices must be replaced with Chinese elements.

To implement this strategy, Xi Jinping’s confidant Xia Baolong, party chief of Zhejiang, initiated a campaign to crackdown the “illegal structures” of both house churches and TSPM churches

in the province, resulting in over 1700 crosses on church buildings removed and demolished and at least 50 churches' entire buildings destroyed. Such campaigns have also been expanding to other provinces.

The sinicization campaign aims to brainwash Christians and to insert a subtle influence to change their mind and value orientation. The government agencies send task forces to churches to inculcate the "love CCP, love socialism" concept to the Christian believers. Meanwhile, the regime provides healthcare to church members, and offers financial support to the poor to win the believers' support.

The Chinese regime's aggressive campaign to remodel Christianity in China and its persecution of the Chinese Christians constitute a gross violation of international law. It will further jeopardize China's chance to transition into a democracy based on the Christian faith. Few in the Western world have realized the significance of China's assault on Christianity and Obama has been silent about the Chinese regime's abuses. We urge the Trump Administration, along with the support of America's evangelical community, to end the Chinese Communist regime's assault against Christianity.

We therefore recommend the following actions:

1. Reaffirm and highlight religious freedom as a core value that the United States will continue to advance and support in China, as one of the main objectives of U.S. foreign policy by raising

the Office of International Religious Freedom to the bureau level in the State Department.

2. Make China's sinicization of Christianity and persecution of the Chinese Christians a primary factor that affects the U.S.-China bilateral relations, and raise these issues as the situation calls for whenever the two governments meet, particularly during the annual U.S.-China Consultation on People-to-People Exchange (CPE)

3. Condition China's permanent trade status with the termination of the sinicization of Christianity campaign and gross abuses of religion freedom.

4. Expand the people-to-people exchange program by adding religious components and increase its funding for more interactions between Chinese and American Christians.

5. Maintain a record for American Christian missionaries or workers to whom China denies visas and respond to unreasonable denials by reciprocating US visa issuance.

6. Increase the U.S. grants making for NGOs that advocate for religious freedom in China and demand the Chinese regime to suspend its implementation of the Foreign NGO Law.

* Dr. YANG Jianli, a Chinese Christian, Tiananmen Massacre survivor and former political prisoner, is the Founder and President of Initiatives for China/Citizen Power for China

Contact Info: Tele: 857-472-9039
Email:yangjianli001@gmail.com